If you do choose to drink alcohol there are some things you can do to reduce harm

- Eat before drinking – a proper meal not just snack food
- Avoid salty foods – you will drink more
- Drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration
- Start with a non-alcoholic drink and make every other drink a non-alcoholic drink
- Drink slowly, pace yourself, space your drinks and put your glass or can down between sips
- Drink light beers or shandies, half measures of spirits and mix wine with soda and ice
- Count your drinks, use a standard glass and don’t let people top up your glass
- Decide your limit and refuse drinks when you have reached your limit – it’s your choice
- Make sure someone who is not drinking is looking after the kids
- Stay busy doing other things like dancing, singing, yarning and playing pool
- Drink in a safe place and have a plan to get home safely
- Do not drive and do not get in the car with someone who has been drinking
Drinks contain different amounts of alcohol. The standard drinks symbol shows approximately how much alcohol each type of drink contains. Different brands can contain different amounts so it is always a good idea to check the label.

What is alcohol?
- Alcohol is a depressant. It slows down your brain and this affects the way you think, feel and behave.
- Alcohol is a very strong drug and can be toxic.
- Beer, wine, spirits or hard liquor, liqueurs, ports, sheries and homebrew all contain different amounts of alcohol.
- The more alcohol a drink contains the stronger it will be.
- Large quantities of alcohol are poisonous but small amounts will not harm most healthy adults.

How alcohol works
When you drink alcohol it gets into your bloodstream, it circulates around your body and some goes to your brain.
Alcohol slows down your brain and affects the way it carries messages. It also affects how your brain talks to other parts of your body. At first you might feel relaxed and happy.
At the same time your liver is working really hard to break down the alcohol and clear any toxins out of your body. A healthy liver can break down about one gram of alcohol per hour.
If you drink it is important to keep track of how much alcohol you are drinking. Standard Drinks can help you to work this out, because a standard drink measures the amount of pure alcohol in a drink, not the amount of liquid.
One standard drink contains about 10 grams of pure alcohol.

Following the new guidelines can help you reduce the risk of harm from drinking alcohol
Some risks from drinking alcohol are alcohol-related injuries such as road trauma, violence, falls, burns and other accidents. To reduce these risks, if you are a healthy man or woman you should not have more than 4 standard drinks on any single occasion.
Some of the health risks from drinking alcohol build up over your lifetime. This means the more you drink the greater the risk. To reduce your risk of alcohol-related disease or injury over your lifetime you should not drink more than 2 standard drinks on any day.

How much alcohol can you consume?
These guidelines do not apply to young people. Under the age of 18 drinking alcohol is not safe. Do not drink alcohol if you are pregnant or planning a baby because alcohol can cause permanent harm to your unborn child. If you are taking medications, or have physical or mental health conditions you should check with your doctor whether it is safe for you to drink alcohol.
You should not drink alcohol alone, when planning to drive, operate machinery, or do things like hunting, fishing, boating, and going bush. Alcohol will affect your judgement and your performance, and you may put yourself and other people at risk.